

PROVIDENCE PUBLIC LIBRARY
Special Collections
Collection #104-04
Collection of Roller Rink Decals
c.1930-c.1950

OVERVIEW OF THE COLLECTION

Number: Collection #104-04

Title: Collection Of Roller Rink Decals

Creator: Providence Public Library, collector

Dates: c.1930-c.1950

Quantity: 1 manuscript container (total 0.5 linear feet)

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Acquisition: Purchased, 2020

Accruals: No accruals are expected.

Custodial history: Unknown.

Processed by: The collection was processed by Jessica Rogers-Cerrato in 2022.

Conservation: Not applicable.

Language: Materials are in English.

RIGHTS AND ACCESS

Access: This collection is open under the rules and regulations of the Providence Public Library, Special Collections department.

Preferred Citation: Researchers are requested to use the following citation format:
[item number], [item title], Collection of Roller Rink Decals, Special Collections, Providence Public Library, Providence, R.I.

Property Rights: Providence Public Library owns the property rights to this collection. Consideration of the copyrights is the responsibility of the researcher.

INFORMATION FOR RESEARCHERS

Separated material None.

Published description Not applicable.

Location of originals Not applicable.

Location of copies Not applicable.

Publication note Not applicable.

Subject headings LCSH:
 Hobbies
 Recreation
 Roller skaters
 Roller skates
 Roller skating
 Roller-skating rinks

 AAT:
 decals
 die cutting
 logos
 printed ephemera

SEE ALSO

- Providence Roller Derby Collection, Special Collections, Providence Public Library, Providence, R.I.
- Genevieve Pittner collection of roller skating rink stickers, Archival Collections, Hagley Museum & Library, Wilmington, D.E.
- National African American Roller Skating Archive (NAARSA), Our Family Skate Association (OFSA), Moorland-Spingarn Research Center (MSRC) at Howard University.
- National Roller Skating Archives, National Museum of Roller Skating, Lincoln, Nebraska.

HISTORICAL NOTE

The first practical roller skate was designed in 1863 by James Plimpton of Medford, Massachusetts. Plimpton opened the first skating rink, at a Rhode Island resort, in 1866, and he went on to establish the New York Roller Skating Association. His real genius, however, lay in marketing roller skating as an appropriate activity for men and women to do together, allowing young Victorian couples to meet without reprisal or rigid chaperoning. Roller skating as a pastime boomed from 1880 to 1910, and the first great recreational roller-skating craze swept the United States and Western Europe, seeing numerous rinks built in both small towns and large cities alike. After a slight dip in popularity, roller skating saw a revival from the 1930s through the 1950s (often referred to as the “Golden Age” of roller skating), followed by another huge resurgence of interest in the 1970s, fueled by the rise of roller disco.

The process of die-cutting originated with the shoe industry in the mid-1800s. Die cutting allowed shoe makers to go from punching holes manually and making each shoe individually, to creating sole patterns that could be replicated and mass produced. In the 20th century, businesses began to use die-cut decals and stickers as branding and promotional tools, because the technique allowed for unique and personalized designs that could easily command attention. Today, die-cutting is widely used in the merchandising industry, stamp industry, and sticker industry, as well as many others.

SCOPE AND CONTENTS OF THE COLLECTION

This collection contains approximately 159 different roller rink decals from the 1930s and 1940s. The decals in this collection showcase rinks throughout the United States as well as Toronto and Vancouver in Canada. They often served as advertisements for the rinks themselves as well as for roller skating as a pastime, and thus are eye-catching in design. Each decal is mounted on a black album page. Some pages feature multiple decals. The decals are die-cut, many in the shape of a roller skate. In addition to images of roller skates, the decals often picture one or a pair of people in the act of skating. The states represented here include Alabama, Arizona, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Missouri, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Virginia, Washington, Washington DC, West Virginia, Wisconsin. The most prominently represented states are California, New York, Pennsylvania, and especially well-represented is New Jersey.

ORGANIZATION OF THE COLLECTION

The Collection of Roller Rink Decals is organized into a single series. The collector's original order has been preserved. Album pages affixed with decals have been placed in folders, approximately 5 pages per folder, and arranged in the same order as they appeared in the original albums. Many album pages feature multiple decals from different states or regions.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE COLLECTION

Item	Title	Date	Box	Folder
1-10	Roller Rink Decals Note: Calif., Ind., Mich., N.J., N.Y., Pa., Wash.	c.1930-c.1950	1	1
11-23	Roller Rink Decals Note: Calif., Idaho, N.Y., Ohio, W. Va.	c.1930-c.1950	1	2
24-35	Roller Rink Decals Note: Calif., Colo., Md., N.Y., Ohio, Pa., Toronto (Ont.)	c.1930-c.1950	1	3
36-45	Roller Rink Decals Note: Fla., Ill., Iowa, Mo., N.C., Pa., Va.	c.1930-c.1950	1	4

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46-57	Roller Rink Decals Note: Calif., Ind., Mich., N.Y., Ohio, Wash., Wis.	c.1930-c.1950	1	5
58-66	Roller Rink Decals Note: Calif., Md., N.J., N.Y., Ohio	c.1930-c.1950	1	6
67-76	Roller Rink Decals Note: Calif., Ind., Mass., Ohio, Va., Wash.	c.1930-c.1950	1	7
77-86	Roller Rink Decals Note: Calif., Conn., Del., Ill., Ind., Ohio, Pa.	c.1930-c.1950	1	8
87-96	Roller Rink Decals Note: Calif., Ill., Ky., Md., Mass., Ohio, Pa., Wash.	c.1930-c.1950	1	9
97-110	Roller Rink Decals Note: Ariz., Calif., D.C., Hawaii, N.J., Ohio, Ore., Pa., Wash.	c.1930-c.1950	1	10
111-123	Roller Rink Decals Note: Calif., N.Y., Okla., Pa., Vancouver (B.C.)	c.1930-c.1950	1	11
124-133	Roller Rink Decals Note: Ala., Calif., Ill., Ind., Mass., Mich., N.Y.	c.1930-c.1950	1	12
134-138	Roller Rink Decals Note: N.J.	c.1930-c.1950	1	13
139-143	Roller Rink Decals Note: Dela., Ill., N.J.	c.1930-c.1950	1	14
144-148	Roller Rink Decals Note: N.J.	c.1930-c.1950	1	15
149-153	Roller Rink Decals Note: N.J.	c.1930-c.1950	1	16
154-159	Roller Rink Decals Note: Calif., N.J.	c.1930-c.1950	1	17